

Information on **Salmonella** Infection

What is Salmonellosis? A bacterial infection of the intestines.

What are the symptoms? Salmonella infection starts with headache, diarrhea, abdominal cramps, nausea and vomiting. Fever is usually present. Dehydration (loss of body fluids) may be severe, especially among infants or the elderly.

What are the sources of Salmonella?

- Raw and undercooked eggs
- Undercooked poultry or meat
- Unpasteurized (raw) milk
- Pets including iguanas, turtles, various reptiles and amphibians, and baby chicks.
- Salmonella bacteria are in the intestines of the infected person or animal and leave the body in the feces. If a person does not wash their hands well after a bowel movement, after changing diapers or handling infected pets, their hands may be contaminated with bacteria. Their dirty hands can in turn contaminate food, toys, or other objects which may lead to infection in others.

How long after being infected does a person become sick?

From 6 to 72 hours, usually within 12 to 36 hours.

When can someone with Salmonella spread it to others?

- From several days to several weeks after infection.
- Taking antibiotics **does not** shorten the time that someone is contagious and may make it longer.

How can the spread of Salmonella be prevented?

- **Thorough hand washing with soap and water:**
 - After using the toilet.
 - After diapering children or assisting them with using the toilet.
 - After handling pets.
 - Before handling food or eating.
- Do not eat raw or undercooked eggs or consume unpasteurized (raw) dairy products.
- Thoroughly cook all meat and poultry products.
- Thoroughly rinse/wash all fruits and vegetables in potable (clean) water. Use a vegetable brush to completely clean unpeeled vegetables.
- Avoid cross-contamination of utensils and food preparation surfaces. Do not use the same knives or cutting boards for raw meats and vegetables. Thoroughly clean all utensils and preparation surfaces.

When can a person with Salmonella return to work or child care?

- **WORK:** Food service workers, child care workers, and health care workers **may** be restricted from work.
- **CHILD CARE:** Children with diarrhea **may** be excluded from child care.

What is the treatment?

- Drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration.
- As a rule, antibiotics are not prescribed if Salmonella is laboratory confirmed.

If you have questions, please call your doctor or local health department.